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FINETTE.

A joy on the wing,
A rainbow of song,
Is Finette in her swing
Singing all the day long
Heaven's music at sight.
No wind flower sway'd
From sunshine to shade
E'er so daintily play'd
Bo-peep with the light.

Now with laughter a-gleam,
Now with shadows at bay,
Like the dawn of a dream
Ere night melts to day
In the light of the soul.
As the lightning's freak
Are the flashes that speak
On her sun-dappled cheek.
As the thunder's blithe roll

On the delicate air
Is the terrible sound
Of her long, laughing hair,
Mystic deluge unbound
From the windows of love.
While wave follows wave
All wicked things rave,
And the sun to his cave
Like a hawk-stricken dove

Sinks dreaming of death
And the wan evening star
Bates her quivering breath
To list from afar
At the ebb and the flow
Of that spring of delight
That wells onward till night,
Weaving shadows with light,
Weaving rapture with woe.

To her sisters she calls
And the host come as one,
But where their light falls
The day dream is done.
Yet deep in my heart
Hides Finette in her swing,
There to swing and to sing
And her radiance fling
Till its pulses depart.

SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE VIOLIN.*

THE INSTRUMENT—continued.

The period of Steiner's career commences from his retiring into a convent after the death of his wife. In the tranquillity of the cloister, he was determined to close his artistic life by the production of master-pieces. Having obtained some superior wood, through the medium of his superior, he made sixteen violins—models, combining every perfection, and sent one to each of the twelve chiefs of electorates of the empire, and presented the remaining four to the Emperor. Since when these instruments are known under the name of *Steiner-electeur*. Tone, pure metallic and aerial, like the beautiful voice of a woman; graceful and elegant in form; exquisitely finished in all the details; transparent varnish of a gold color; such are the qualities which distinguish these productions of the third and last period of Steiner's talent. The labels are in the hand-writing of this celebrat-

ed maker. Three of these rare instruments only have been met with, the fate of the others remains unknown. The first was given by the Empress Maria Theresa to Kennis, a Belgian violinist from Liege, after whose death it was taken to England, and became the property of Sir Richard Betenson, Bart. Another *Steiner-electeur* was purchased in Germany, in 1771, by the Duke of Orleans, grandfather of King Louis Philippe, for the sum of 3,500 florins. Afterwards, this prince having discontinued playing the violin, he gave it to the younger Novogille in token of the pleasure he experienced in hearing him accompany Madame de Maintenon. This precious violin became the property of the violinist Cartier in 1817: it was in the hands of this artist when I heard and saw it. The third *violin-electeur* was in the possession of the King of Prussia, Frederick William II.

After leaving Steiner, the Klotz copied his models of the second period, and these instruments are not unfrequently mistaken for those of the master; they are, however, readily distinguished by the varnish—that of Klotz, instead of a deep red, is a black ground shaded with yellow; the tone of Mathias Klotz's instruments is silvery, but of little power. These artists brought forth many pupils in the Tyrol, who imitated the Cremona models; but these imitations are easily discoverable by the inferior quality of the wood, the varnish, which is very dark, and the tone, which is deficient in every quality.

The ancient manufacture of musical instruments in France, incontestably inferior to that of Italy, is represented during the reigns of Henry the Fourth and of Louis the Thirteenth, by Jacques Bocquay, born at Lyons, and who settled in Paris; Pierrot, his townsman, who produced more instruments, but of inferior finish; Antoine Despons and Adrian Verona; these generally copied the Amati. The violins of the successor of Bocquay, Guerson, his pupil, are of small pattern, and finely finished. They have become extremely scarce; it is supposed there are not more than twenty that can be considered as of his own make; these are varnished in oil. The others were made in his workshop by his pupils; they are of inferior quality, and varnished in spirits of wine. The contemporaries of Guerson at Paris were Castagnery and Saint Paul, whose violins were formerly esteemed for accompaniment. After these came Saloman, whose instruments rivalled those of Guerson. Towards the end of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, Lagetts enjoyed a certain reputation. As regards the ancient manufacture of the provinces of France, there is nothing which rises above mediocrity, with the exception of Medard, contemporary with Jerome Amati, whose models he copied. He lived at Nancy at the commencement of the seventeenth century. Lambert, surnamed the *Charpentier de la Lutherie*, came a century later in the same town. He produced nothing of any note. Saunier, his pupil, surpassed his master in finish, but in general, Lorraine was the country of industry, not of art.

In the modern manufacture of instruments of Paris, *Finth* is specially distinguished. He was a German who worked about 1770. He followed the proportions of Straduari; all his violins, varnished in oil, are finished with care. They were greatly sought after in the first instance, but a change in taste followed, and opinion fell into a contrary excess. After *Finth* came *Picle*, pupil of Saunier, whose violins were given as prizes

to the pupils of the Conservatory of Paris, at the beginning of the present century; they have been esteemed of little value. Not so so with *Lupot*, who came from Orleans to settle in Paris in 1794. He studied with great perseverance the proportions of Straduari, incontestably the best, and selected the best wood that could be obtained. Lupot made the manufacture of violins his great study, and their finish was a work of love. They are highly esteemed, and stand next in value to artists with good Cremona instruments.

Thus far we have only seen the manufacture of bow instruments cultivated by inspiration or by imitation; science was not brought in as an element in the construction of these instruments; but we have arrived at a period of transition in this respect, less, perhaps, from the results obtained, than from the foundations which have been laid—and I will first advert to the several essays which have been made with the view of dispensing with certain portions of the form of instruments considered as obstacles to the free production of vibration.

The first essay of this kind was made in 1816 by Francois Chanut, the son of an instrument maker of Mirecourt, since an engineer of the navy. Convinced that the best means of producing vibration in all the various parts of the violin was to preserve, as far as it was practicable, the fibres of the wood lengthwise, concluding that the *shoulders* of the ordinary violin with their angles were insuperable obstacles to a free and powerful quality of tone; believing also that the hollowing out of the belly to give it the vaulted form was contrary to the principles of this theory, and consequently a radical error. He was persuaded also that the short fibres produced acute tones, and long fibres grave ones. Upon these principles he constructed a violin, the belly of which was only slightly raised, the S holes nearly straight; and, in place of sloping the instrument after the ordinary form, he depressed the sides gradually, similar to the body of a guitar. With the view of favoring as much as possible the concussion of the belly, he attached the strings to the lower part of the belly, instead of the ordinary tail-piece. This done, Chanut submitted his violin to the Academy of the Sciences and of the Fine Arts of the French Institute, and a favorable report of the essay was published in the *Moniteur Universel*, on the 22d of August, 1817. The judgment pronounced by these institutions had not been confirmed by the opinion of artists.

It is to be remarked, that what Chanut conceived to be a discovery was simply returning to the form of the viol of the middle age—that the same form had been adopted by able makers, and that there is still extant a bass viol of Gaspard de Salo, the angles of which are removed, in the possession of M. Frazzini at Milan; that another bass of the same form, constructed by Pierre Guarneri, belongs to M. Cappel at Mantua; and that M. de Rosetta, of Bergamo, possesses an old violin of the same form. The artists who made these essays discovered that the results did not answer their expectations.

A retired officer of the Italian army, M. Galbusera, reproduced the protracted invagination of Chanut in a violin which he exposed in the Palace of Brera at Milan in 1832. M. Antolini, of that city, a distinguished artist, in a small pamphlet criticised the false prin-

* Translated from the French of M. E. J. Fétis, Chapel Master to the King of the Belgians, Director of the Royal Conservatory of Music, etc., by Wellington Guernsey.

ciple which led to the return to primitive forms.*

Some years after Chanut's violin had been consigned to the department of the museum specially devoted to this object, Felix Savart, a physician of eminence, struck with the discoveries of Chladni on the communication of vibrations and regularity of sonorous waves, engaged himself with great ardor to the application of these discoveries in the construction of bow instruments, and after several experiments made with great sagacity, he arrived at the following deductions:—1st. When two or a larger number of bodies, whatever their condition may otherwise be, come into immediate contact, and that one is directly put into motion, they all produce the same number of vibrations at the same time. 2d. All their vibrations follow parallel directions. 3d. The increase of the sound of any kind of body—for example of a string—depends upon the simultaneity of the vibrations of the bodies with which this string is in contact, and this increase is carried to its highest point when the bodies put in motion by communication are in the conditions such as, if they were directly put into motion, they would produce the same number of vibrations as the body acted upon in the first instance.

The particular consequences of these principles are, that the vibrations produced by the strings of the violin are communicated to the belly by the bridge, from the belly to the back by the sounding post; and that the oscillations, in equal number, of all these bodies, cause equal vibration, and by similar numbers of oscillations the mass of air held in suspension in the body of the instrument; hence it follows that the object in the construction of this sonorous box is to favor as much as possible the communication of the waves, and to bring into harmony. In seeking the application of this theory to the manufacture of box instruments, Savart fell into error in the first pamphlet he wrote upon this subject,† when he emitted the opinion that the curves, the angles, and the raised belly adopted by the old manufacturers could only have proceeded from the prejudices of routine; but he discovered this error while he continued the prosecution of his studies, and he ultimately extolled the proportions of Straduari, which he undertook only to favor the happy effects from considerations which the celebrated maker had not perceived.

A manufacturer of the greatest intelligence, M. Vuillaume, sen., born at Mericourt, and settled in Paris, devoted himself to the principles of constructing bow instruments, at the very time Savart was occupied in endeavoring to discover them. These two scientific men, in constant communication with each other on this subject, reciprocally aided each other. The artist brought to the man of science the tribute of his experience, and the man of science to the artist the result of his meditations. Vuillaume had been for a lengthened period engaged in experiments on the density, homogeneity, and elasticity of various woods, convinced of the importance of this matter for the solution in most of the problems of acoustics relative to the better sonorous quality of instruments. He was thus enabled to discover the

most suitable wood used in the lining of ancient instruments, as regards their qualities or their defects, and the most signal success crowned his researches. Many instruments of great price, after having been deteriorated in unskillful hands, recovered their former value through the ability of this distinguished maker. What he acquired in this respect he applied to all instruments of his own manufacture, and his deep study of the proportions of the best ancient instruments, joined to his knowledge of the special nature of woods, and the laws of vibration, has enabled him to produce a multitude of very superior instruments which require only time to stamp with excellence.

It will be seen from what has been said, that the art of constructing bow instruments has departed from the prejudices of routine, working in the dark, and imitation, to pursue the wake of science, of observation, and of calculation. There can be no doubt but this is a veritable progress, but to shield this progress from all contestation the effect of time is requisite. To bring a good instrument to that state of equilibrium which will make its qualities manifest, on the one part it is necessary that the materials employed in its construction should for a lengthened period be submitted to the action of the various states of temperature and atmosphere; on the other, that the elasticity of the various parts should have been put for a long time into action to acquire all its development.

ART AND ARTISTS.

When singers possessed only part-singing pieces such as madrigals, and glees for four, five, or six parts, positive instrumental music was unknown. Instrumentalists played from the singing parts in unison, either on the bow instruments, or the organ and spinet, or on wind instruments, such as oboes, flutes, horns or cromorns; for each instrument was then divided in upper, high, counter, tenor, and bass. The *ricercari* and dance tunes for four, five, or six viols, formed the only instrumental music proper. Little skill was necessary in the execution, and the artists required no greater amount of talent than the music they had to execute. As regards the violin, few only then cultivated it. In Italy, one Giovanni Battista, surnamed *Del Violino*, is constantly cited, on account of his violin performance. He lived in 1590. As regards Julien Tiburtino and Louis Lasagrino, who were in high repute at Florence about 1540, and of Ganassi del Fontega speaks in his *Regola Rubertina*, they were performers on the viol, and not violinists. The same may be said of Beaulieu, Salmon, and others, who were at the court of France. According to Mersenne, the French distinguished themselves as violinists at the commencement of the seventeenth century. He speaks in terms of great praise of the elegant playing of Constantine, King of the Viols; of the vehement enthusiasm of Boccan; of the delicacy and expression of Lazzarin and of Foucard. These artists lived in 1630. However, France soon afterwards lost its superiority in that respect. In 1650, Father Castrovillari, a monk of Padua, became distinguished by his performance on the violin, and by the music he wrote for that instrument. The art of executing difficulties upon the violin must have attained a high degree of progress in the north of Europe even as far back as 1675, for Jean Jacques Walther,

principal violin soloist at the court of Saxony, published at this period several works among which, one is peculiarly remarkable and bears for its title *Hortulus Chelicus* (Mayence, 1688, in oblong quarto of 129 pages,) containing sonatas and serenades, to be performed on a single violin, with double, triple, and quadruple strings. This piece, which displays great invention, consists of twenty-four pieces. The title of the last may serve to show the novelties which Walther introduced to the art of playing the violin: "Serenade for a chorus of Violins, trembling organ, small guitar, bagpipe, two trumpets and kettle-drums, German lyre and muted harp, for a single violin." The various effects of this piece for a single violin, prove that Walther was the Paganini of his day.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MADAME MALIBRAN.—A story is told of this beautiful child of song, that on one of her journeys in Italy which took her through Arezzo, the people, learning her arrival there, refused to let her pass on her journey until she had sung for them from the balcony of the inn. She refused, declaring that she could not, and would not. A gentleman robber then emerged from the crowd, presented his pistol at her, and urged his claim upon the fair songstress. She wept with agitation and anger, but the mob still continued inexorable. Her courier (who proved to be De Beriot, her husband) went to the carriage, brought out his violin, and amused the audience in the street with an exquisite performance, until Malibran had wiped her eyes and recovered her voice. She then sang a cavatina in her very best manner, and received louder applause than she had ever met with in Europe or America. The delighted Arezzians then harnessed themselves to her carriage, and dragged her on her road several miles.

[From the Buffalo Courier.]

CONCERT AT LOCKPORT.—Last night the Grand Concert inaugurating the fine organ built by Mr. House, of this city, was given in the First Presbyterian Church, at Lockport, with great eclat. Mr. George W. Morgan, of New York, one of the most extraordinary performers of the day, presided at the instrument, in a manner so miraculously perfect, that we shall not attempt an analysis of his performances. In the first place, were we to attempt anything of the sort, we should be embarrassed as to whether we should compliment most his pedal playing, or his astounding execution with his fingers. The man is a perfect mystery in this relation, and as such we leave him, remarking only that in a somewhat varied experience of many years, we never heard the organ played in a manner so absolutely enchanting.

MRS. KEMPTON IN BOSTON.—Dwight's *Journal of Music* speaks of Mrs. Kempton in the following terms:—"But the chief feature of the concert was Mrs. Kempton's singing. Her rich contralto has lost some of its freshness while she has been abroad; but she has won, instead, that which is even better, a sound, ripe, noble style. Truly, we have not heard 'He was despaired' sung with such chaste, artistic beauty, such simple yet sufficing expression, such absence of forced pathos, for a long time; she let the music tell its story in its own way, and that is far the higher kind of art, compared to what is called pathos on the operatic stage."

* *Asservazioni su due Violini esposti nelle sale dell' J. R. Palazzo di Brera ma de' quali di forma non comune.* Milan, 1832, in 8vo.

† *Memoire sur la construction des instruments a cordes et a archet, lu a l' Academie des Sciences le 31 Mai, 1819.* Paris: Deterville, 1 vol. in 8vo.